

possibility of parole, it may well facilitate the extradition while still providing a serious sentence for the offenders.

On the immigration front my hosts assured me that Mexico is making a serious effort to reduce the traffic of illegal immigrants from Mexico into the United States. These efforts are largely focused on limiting the flow of illegals from third countries as opposed to the flow of Mexicans themselves. Before they seek to illegally enter the United States, hundreds of thousands of would-be immigrants from South and Central American must first illegally enter Mexico. But Mexico is cracking down on these illegals and is deporting them back to their home countries in large numbers. I was informed that last year the Mexicans deported over 200,000 such illegals. The Mexicans are also requiring visas for visitors from countries such as Brazil and Ecuador who did not previously need them.

The Mexicans have also agreed to permit the U.S. to implement an interior repatriation program. Typically, when we catch an illegal immigrant, we deposit them on the other side of our border with Mexico where they are tantalizingly close to the United States and likely to try again to enter. Under the interior repatriation program, we fly those illegals who wish it all the way back to their home towns and villages. Once home, far away from the border, they are far less likely to try again. So far, this program has returned 13,000 illegal immigrants to their homes in Mexico.

From the Mexican Foreign Ministry we drove to the United States Embassy, where I was greeted by over 30 representatives of the Embassy and other U.S. agencies for a briefing on our drug and counter-terror efforts. This briefing largely confirmed what I had learned earlier in the day from the Mexican officials. Larry Holifield, the regional director of the DEA for Mexico and Central America, described the great cooperation between our DEA and their Mexican counterparts, including permission to conduct wiretaps and joint operations where vetted Mexican police units act on U.S. intelligence tips to take down members of the drug cartels. He and others spoke about the help we have provided to the Mexicans in building their police force and how effective this has been.

Greg Stephens of the Department of Justice confirmed that the Mexicans are getting better on extradition. As of 6 years ago the Mexicans had never extradited a Mexican citizen to the United States. Last year the Mexicans extradited 34 people to the United States and are on track to extradite a similar number this year. Renee Harris of U.S. Customs and Border Control spoke about the internal repatriation program and agreed that it was working, although she would like to see more help from the Mexican government in publicizing the program to its citizens. In response to my question

about what more we can do to stem the flow of illegal immigrants, Ms. Harris responded with a familiar refrain: we can provide more technology, equipment and training.

Following this meeting, we drove to the offices of the Mexican President, Vicente Fox. Before our meeting with the President began, I had the opportunity to sit down with Mexican Attorney General Daniel Francisco Cabeza de Vaca. I asked Attorney General Cabeza de Vaca about the extradition issue and if it would help if we agreed not to seek a sentence of longer than 60 years for anyone extradited to the United States from Mexico. The Attorney General thought this would help, and told me that he had discussed this topic directly with Attorney General Gonzales. He also believed that the problematic Supreme Court decision would be reviewed.

I asked the attorney General about the situation in Nuevo Laredo, and he expressed confidence that the situation was improving. He told me that the Federal Government had sent over 1,500 police to the city and that some important arrests were made just last week. He praised the sharing of intelligence with the United States which has helped them to identify and detain targets. He said there were two phases to combating the violence in Nuevo Laredo. The first phase was to ensure the permanent presence of the Federal police and the army in the City. This has already been accomplished. The second phase was to improve local law enforcement and create a new and professional local police force which was not owned by the cartels. He expected to see a reduction in the level of violence very soon. The Attorney General also asked for my assistance in the matter. He told me that the warring cartels were using very high powered weapons, including 50 caliber machine guns and rocket launchers, and that these weapons were coming from the United States. I agreed to contact the ATF to see what could be done to stem the flow of such illegal weapons to Mexico.

Next I was received by President Vicente Fox. Fox started off our meeting by telling me that it is vital for the United States, Canada and Mexico to work together on a variety of problems including immigration, counter narcotics, and terrorism. He noted that our three nations were losing jobs to Asia and needed to work jointly to bolster our economies.

On the issue of violence in Nuevo Laredo and elsewhere, the President told me that Mexico has both a short term and a long-term approach. In the short term, Mexico has jailed 40,000 members of the drug cartels in a 4-year period. Among those in prison are six of the country's major drug lords. The President complained, however, that even while in jail some drug lords have been able to continue to run their syndicates by bribing prison guards for access to telephones and other means of communication. Fox then spoke in

more general terms about the problem of police corruption at the local level. He noted that police earn a salary of \$600 a month but are offered bribes in the thousands. In Nuevo Laredo alone, 1,100 policemen were fired from their jobs last month for corruption. The Federal Government has moved 1,000 policemen into the area to stem the violence.

In the long term, President Fox told us that he is trying to foster greater cooperation between the Mexican Federal Government and the Mexican states. To do so would require passage of legislation that has long been pending in the Mexican Congress. President Fox's party controls neither house of Congress and so far this legislation has not been enacted. To emphasize the importance of better cooperation from local police, President Fox pointed out that there are approximately 400,000 local police and only 10,000 Federal police. He also noted that approximately 95 percent of all crime consists of violation of state and local laws, while only 5 percent is Federal.

On the issue of extradition, President Fox told me that he would like to extradite more criminals to the United States but is limited by what his Supreme Court has done. While he would like to see this opinion overruled, he is sensitive not to take any action which would be counter productive. But he is working hard in the fight against drugs. He told me that earlier that day he spent 2 hours with his counter narcotics experts. He plans to meet with the governors of Arizona and New Mexico to discuss the states of emergency that they have declared in response to the influx of illegal drugs and immigrants.

On the violence in Nuevo Laredo, President Fox stated that the cause was the fight between rival drug cartels for control of the city. He is using his military in Nuevo Laredo. I told President Fox that I was not optimistic that the war over the drug cartels could be won having observed the problems in Colombia since the early 1980s and having now seen the problems in Venezuela and Costa Rica. I asked the President if he felt that war was winnable. President Fox replied that it would be very difficult to win the war on drugs as long as the demand for drugs remains strong. But he believes that the fight must continue.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING RALPH CURTIS

• Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to recognize one of my constituents, Mr. Ralph Curtis. Mr. Curtis has served as manager of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District for 25 years. He took over the managerial position when the organization was very small, consisting of just Ralph and one other employee. The time and energy that Ralph has given

to the Rio Grande Water Conservation District has made this organization the well respected entity that it is within the San Luis Valley and Colorado.

Because he grew up on—and later managed—his family's ranch in Saguache, Ralph has long been aware of the importance of water to the San Luis Valley. Under his direction, the district took a leadership role in fighting against the American Water Development Inc. water grab, in water conservation education and in pro-active efforts on behalf of endangered species such as the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher.

Ralph's community contributions have not gone unmarked either. He has been honored with numerous awards such as: the Wayne Aspinall Water Leader of the Year, San Luis Valley Wetlands Stewardship Award, Friend of 4-H, Distinguished Service Award for Conservation of Natural Resources, Support of Colorado Association of Soil Conservations Districts, and he was inducted into the Honorable Order of the Water Buffalo.

Ralph has always looked ahead to the next challenge, has always looked forward to the next hill, in order to see where the road will lead him. I would like to wish Ralph and his wife Gloria the very best as they walk down that new road together looking for new challenges.●

CONGRATULATIONS TO JAY DAVIDSON

● Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, I pay tribute and congratulate Jay Davidson on his reception of an America Honors Recovery Award given to him by the Johnson Institute, a nationally recognized organization dedicated to helping people overcome alcohol and substance addiction.

Mr. Davidson has dedicated his life to the cause of fighting addiction. He does this by serving as the president and CEO of The Healing Place, based in Louisville, KY. Under Mr. Davidson, this center has achieved a success rate of 65 percent, which is five times the national average. The efforts of The Healing Place have been so successful that this year Governor Ernie Fletcher has announced that it will serve as a model to 10 other shelter and recovery centers throughout Kentucky. In fact, this model has been effective enough that other branches of The Healing Place have been opened in Lexington, KY, Raleigh, NC, and Richmond, VA.

The citizens of Kentucky are fortunate to have the leadership of Jay Davidson. His example of dedication, hard work and compassion should be an inspiration to all throughout the Commonwealth.

He has my most sincere appreciation for this work and I look forward to his continued service to Kentucky.●

TRIBUTE TO PATRICIA M. DIXON

● Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the outstanding serv-

ice and dedication in the field of economic development of Mrs. Patricia M. Dixon, this on the occasion of her retirement from the Economic Development Administration, United States Department of Commerce effective today, September 28, 2005.

Mrs. Dixon has served honorably at the Economic Development Administration for 33 years, most recently and prominently as the Economic Development Representative to the State of South Carolina. Her contributions to economic development in South Carolina are numerous and have greatly contributed to the economic progress of the most distressed areas of the State. Her work has been widely recognized most notably by the South Carolina Association of Regional Councils, which awarded her their highest honor, the Outstanding Staff Award in 1991.

Mrs. Dixon has demonstrated her work in disaster recovery and base closures, saving jobs, solving solid waste problems, expanding job opportunities and rebuilding tax bases. Her innovative approaches to economic development problems and issues have been replicated in other communities. She also served as the first Federal cochair of the South Carolina Rural Development Council under the President's Initiative for Rural Development. Mrs. Dixon continues to serve on the executive committees of both the North and South Carolina rural development councils. In addition, she was instrumental in the original establishment of revolving loan funds for economic development districts in South Carolina.

Mrs. Dixon has garnered the personal and professional respect and admiration of her friends and colleagues at the Economic Development Administration and elsewhere. She represents the finest of qualities in a public servant and has been an incomparable asset to the greater effort of improving quality of life for the people of South Carolina. In conclusion, the retirement of Mrs. Patricia M. Dixon will be a great loss to the EDA and the State of South Carolina, but I wish her great success and happiness in her future.●

HONORING IOWA COMMUNITY LEADERS

● Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, every year the Iowa Council for International Understanding honors immigrants and refugees in Iowa who have, in the words of the council, "achieved, belonged and contributed to our community in a significant way."

The ICIU began in 1938 when a group of volunteers joined forces to aid immigrants fleeing the war in Europe. Since their founding, the ICIU has continued to provide cultural services to both the immigrant community and to native-born Iowans. The United States has always been a beacon of hope for many around the world seeking refuge from oppressive regimes, and it is my belief that each generation of immigrants has enriched our Nation both cul-

turally and economically. My mother was an immigrant from Slovenia, and I am proud to be a first generation American.

I take this opportunity to join in honoring the recipients of this year's ICIU awards and to thank and congratulate them for all they have achieved and contributed to Iowa's communities.

Joe Gonzalez was born in Mexico and immigrated to Des Moines in 1957. In 1971, he joined the Des Moines Police Department. He was one of the first Hispanic officers in the department and has garnered numerous awards, on both the State and national level, over his 33-year tenure. Among other things, Officer Gonzalez has been particularly active in aiding crime victims and victims of sexual and domestic abuse. After the September 11 attacks, he worked at Ground Zero.

Sonia Parras Konrad immigrated to the United States 9 years ago from Granada, Spain. She was trained as a lawyer and is most recently a graduate of Drake University Law School. Today she practices law in Iowa. Ms. Konrad is being honored today for her passionate dedication to helping victims of domestic and sexual violence, particularly within Spanish speaking communities. Among the programs she has founded is LUNA, Latinas Unidas por un Nuevo Amanecer—Latinas United for a New Dawn—designed to prevent and deal with the effects of domestic and sexual violence. This program has aided countless Iowans and has been used as a model in other states.

Juliet Cunningham emigrated from Kirkuk, Iraq, to the United States in 1979 to pursue advanced educational opportunities. She is actively involved with many Iowa institutions, including the Iowa State University Engineering and Research Complex, Des Moines Science Center, Society of Women Engineers and the West Des Moines United Methodist Church. In 1994 Mrs. Cunningham cofounded TEAM Services Inc., a soil, environmental, and construction materials consulting firm with her husband. Of particular note is her role in helping get a TEAM Services laboratory in central Iowa accredited for the testing of construction materials, making it the first laboratory in Iowa with these capabilities.

Dr. Liansuo Xie was born in 1958 and grew up in China's Hebei Province. He worked as a mechanic in a paper manufacturing plant there before studying to receive a B.S. from the Beijing Agricultural Engineering University in 1982. Shortly thereafter, he married and came to the U.S. to study further at Iowa State University where he eventually earned a Ph.D. and was honored with a Research Excellence award. He is widely considered to be one of the best engineers at the Townsend Engineering Company in Des Moines, where he has worked since 1990, for his work on project design and design productivity. Finally, Dr. Liansuo is a long-standing contributor to his community, serving as a founding member of